

UNCLASSIFIED

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Page: 1

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07385 101715Z

14
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 DHA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 SY-05 PRS-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06
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R 101557Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7863

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 7385

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, AR, ASEC
SUBJECT: TERRORISTS BOMB PROVINCIAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS INJURING
ELEVEN

047271

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release (☐) Excise (☐) Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: (☐) In Part (☒) In Full DECLASSIFIED

(☐) Classify as ☐ (☐) Extend as ☐ (☐) Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

1. ELEVEN POLICE OFFICIALS WERE INJURED--THREE SERIOUSLY-- IN A TERRORIST BOMBING OF THE LA PLATA POLICE HEADQUARTERS LAST NIGHT (NOVEMBER 9). THE BOMB APPARENTLY EXPLODED IN THE OFFICE OF ASSISTANT POLICE CHIEF COL. ERNESTO TROTZ DURING A CONFERENCE OF TOP PROVINCIAL POLICE CHIEFS. ANOTHER BOMB PLACED IN THE HEADQUARTERS AMMUNITION DUMP WAS DEACTIVATED BY POLICE. HAD IT GONE OFF, A SPOKESMAN SAID, IT WOULD HAVE BLOWN UP THE ENTIRE BUILDING. NO GROUP CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BOMBING, ALTHOUGH THE PRESS SPECULATES IT WAS THE MONTONEROS, WHO HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE IN LA PLATA RECENTLY. SOURCES ALSO SPECULATE THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN AN "INSIDE JOB" SINCE WHOEVER SET THE BOMB MUST HAVE KNOWN OF THE SCHEDULED MEETING AND HAD ACCESS TO COL. TROTZ'S OFFICE.

2. POLICE IMMEDIATELY CORDONED OFF THE AREA AND BEGAN INTENSIVE SEARCH. FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF EDMUNDO OJEDA, PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR SAINT JEAN, AND OTHER TOP MILITARY OFFICIALS VISITED THE SCENE, REPORTEDLY AUTHORITIES, INCLUDING OJEDA AND FIRST CORPS COMMANDER SUAREZ MASON, MET LATER TO DISCUSS THE ATTACK.

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

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Current Class: [REDACTED]
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Page: 2

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

[REDACTED]
PAGE 02 BUENOS 07385 101715Z

3. BUENOS AIRES HERALD TODAY (NOVEMBER 10) DESCRIBED THE BOMBING AND RECENT MURDERS OF COMPANY EXECUTIVES--EIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED OUTSIDE THEIR HOMES IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS--AS TERRORIST "TACTICS OF DESPERATION", WHICH IT SAID SUGGESTS TERRORISM IS IN ITS LAST STAGES. IT ALSO POINTED OUT CONTINUING VULNERABILITY OF SECURITY FORCES AND CHIDED POLICE SECURITY.

4. COMMENT. YESTERDAY'S BOMBING ONCE AGAIN SHOWS THE CONTINUING CAPABILITY OF TERRORIST GROUPS TO STAGE SPECTACULAR ATTACKS, AS WELL AS THEIR SUCCESS IN INFILTRATING DEEP INTO THE SECURITY FORCES THEMSELVES. IN LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS, TERRORISTS HAVE MANAGED TO PLACE BOMBS IN THE FEDERAL POLICE SECURITY HEAD-QUARTERS DINING ROOM, THE REVIEWING STAND IN CAMPO DE MAYO MILITARY GARRISON WHERE PRESIDENT VIDELA GAVE A SPEECH, THE CIRCULO MILITAR AND NOW IN THE PRIVATE OFFICE OF PROVINCIAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS. WHILE ONLY THE FIRST INCIDENT RESULTED IN DEATHS, INJURIES TO POLICE OFFICIALS AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE BEEN HEAVY. THE TERRORISTS' AIM IS CLEARLY TO SOW SUSPICION WITHIN THE SECURITY FORCES AND PROBABLY TO FORCE THEM INTO EVEN GREATER REPRESSION WHICH COULD BUILD PUBLIC RESISTANCE AND OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT. HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY HAVE BEEN IS NOT EASY TO JUDGE, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO DOUBT THE ATTACKS SERVE TO WHIP UP INCREASED FURY AMONG MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICERS AND LIKELY MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE MORE MODERATE AND IMAGE-CONSCIOUS MILITARY LEADERS TO KEEP THEIR PEOPLE IN LINE. (RSO REPORTS THAT TWO POLICE OFFICERS--RECRUITED BY THE MONTONEROS FIVE YEARS EARLIER BEFORE GOING INTO THE POLICE ACADEMY--WERE FOUND RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECURITY HEADQUARTERS BOMBING. SUBSEQUENTLY, ANOTHER EIGHT POLICE OFFICERS WERE DISCOVERED TO BE OR HAVE CONNECTIONS WITH THE MONTONEROS, RSO SOURCES REPORT.)

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Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED